



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

### **Agricultural Weather Highlights - Tuesday - December 16, 2003**

- ***In the West***, precipitation is returning to areas from the ***Cascades westward***, where wet conditions persist. Long-term drought and low reservoir levels continue to affect most of the remainder of the ***West***, although recent precipitation has boosted high-elevation snow packs.
- ***On the Plains***, cool, breezy weather prevails across the ***southern half of the region*** in the wake of yesterday's storm system. The storm's passage briefly created blizzard conditions on the ***central High Plains*** and triggered a dust storm in winter wheat areas of the drought-stricken ***southern High Plains***. Winter wheat retains a patchy, shallow protective snow cover across the ***northern half of the Plains***.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, snowy, breezy conditions across the ***upper Mississippi Valley*** are stressing livestock and causing travel disruptions, although the precipitation is providing beneficial moisture. Meanwhile in the ***southern and eastern Corn Belt***, rain showers are maintaining adequate to locally excessive soil moisture for winter wheat.
- ***In the South***, scattered showers and thunderstorms are sweeping across the ***lower Mississippi Valley***. In the ***Southeast***, where recent frosts and freezes have slowed the growth of pastures and winter grains, a brief warm spell precedes the showers.

**Outlook:** A storm system and its attendant cold front will bring another round of rain to the ***eastern one-third of the U.S.***, with heavy snow initially limited to the ***Great Lakes States and upper Midwest***. However, as the system reaches the ***East Coast*** at mid-week, another winter storm will develop, generating high winds and locally heavy rain and snow across the ***Northeast***. Meanwhile, a high-pressure system will provide mild, mostly dry weather across the ***western half of the U.S.***, although a weakening front may produce periods of rain and snow across the ***Pacific Northwest, northern Rockies, and northern Plains***. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for December 21-25 calls for near- to above-normal temperatures across much of the U.S. Cooler-than-normal conditions will be confined to the ***Gulf Coast region***. Wet conditions are expected in the ***Pacific Northwest***, along the ***Gulf Coast***, and in the ***southern Atlantic States***, with mostly dry weather prevailing elsewhere.

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**Web Site:** <http://www.usda.gov/oce/waob/jawf/AgWxHighlights/TODAYSWX.PDF>